Infant deaths

*248. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India ranks first in the total number of child deaths, with 2.4 million dying before the age of five, whereas China with a higher population base, ranks third with 7,84,000 child deaths;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor, indicating figures of neo-natal mortality rate during the last three years, year-wise and State-wise; and

(c) what preventive measures Government have taken, so far, to control infant deaths/gender bias from birth prevalent in certain States like Orissa etc. and need of raising awareness and strengthening laws in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) Sierra Leone is the country with a under five mortality rate of 284 which is the highest in all the countries of the world. In Asia, Pakistan has a under five mortality rate of 107 and a rank of 44 as compared to India with a under five mortality rate 93 and a rank of 53. China has a under five mortality rate of 39 and a rank of 86. Further, last year China had about 10 million new borns against about 25 million by India due to prevalence of high fertility in some large States of India.

(b) The principal causes of Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) in India are low birth weight, sepsis, respiratory infections, diarrhoeal diseases and congenital mal formation. The tables indicating the neo-natal mortality rate both State-wise (larger States) and year-wise are as under:

India and bigger States	1999	2000	2001
India	45	44	40
Andhra Pradesh	46	45	40
Assam	53	47	46
Bihar	41	42	39
Gujarat	43	42	40
Haryana	39	38	38

India and bigger States	1999	2000	2001
Karnataka	43	40	40
Kerala	11	10	09
Madhya Pradesh	61	59	53
Maharashtra	29	33	30
Orissa	61	61	59
Punjab	34	29	31
Rajasthan	50	49	47
Tamil Nadu	36	36	32
Uttar Pradesh	52	53	47
West Bengal	31	31	31

(c) To control infant deaths, the initiatives being undertaken are:

1. Interventions for immunization against the six vaccines preventable diseases *i.e.* tuberculosis, diptheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles.
2. Control of acute respiratory infection.
3. Control of diarrhoeal diseases.
4. Provision of essential new born care.
5. Vitamin-A supplementation.
6. Iron and folic acid supplementation.
7. Promotion of exclusive breast feeding upto the age of 6 months and appropriate practices related to complementary feeding.
8. Preconception and pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 PC&PNDT Act being implemented throughout the country to counter gender bias. It has been amended to strengthen it in 2003.

9. Implementation of Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illness (IMNCI) Programme in collaboration with WHO and UNICEF whereby availability of home based and community care alongwith referral linkage will be made available in States like Orissa, MP, UP with high IMR by training doctors and grassroot health related workers.

Bogie frame of standard gauge

*249. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Railways have developed a bogie frame of standard gauge, which is the gauge used by Railways all over the world;

(b) if so, the details of the plan drawn up for its introduction on the Indian Railways, which, presently, has entirely different gauges—broad, metre and narrow—so as to integrate the Indian Railways with the railway system of the world; and

(c) the details of initiatives taken, if any, to explore the possibility of exporting such standard gauge railway coaches to earn foreign exchange?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) Standard Gauge (1435mm) is one of the popular gauges being used by Railways in many countries of Europe and USA. Indian Railways do not use standard gauge. Rail Coach Factory (RCF), Kapurthala have, however, developed the design of a standard gauge bogie for export purpose.

(b) There is no plan for introduction of standard gauge bogies on Indian Railways.

(c) Exploring export market is an ongoing exercise which is undertaken by M/s Rail India Technical and Economic Services (RITES) on behalf of Indian Railways. Development of Standard Gauge bogie design is a step towards equipping ourselves for potential export in world market.